

INSTRUCTOR LITERATURE SERIES

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BOLO THE CAVE BOY

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F. A. OWEN PUBLISHING COMPANY
DANSVILLE, N. Y.

Grace Barrier

INSTRUCTOR LITERATURE SERIES

Bolo the Cave Boy

BY

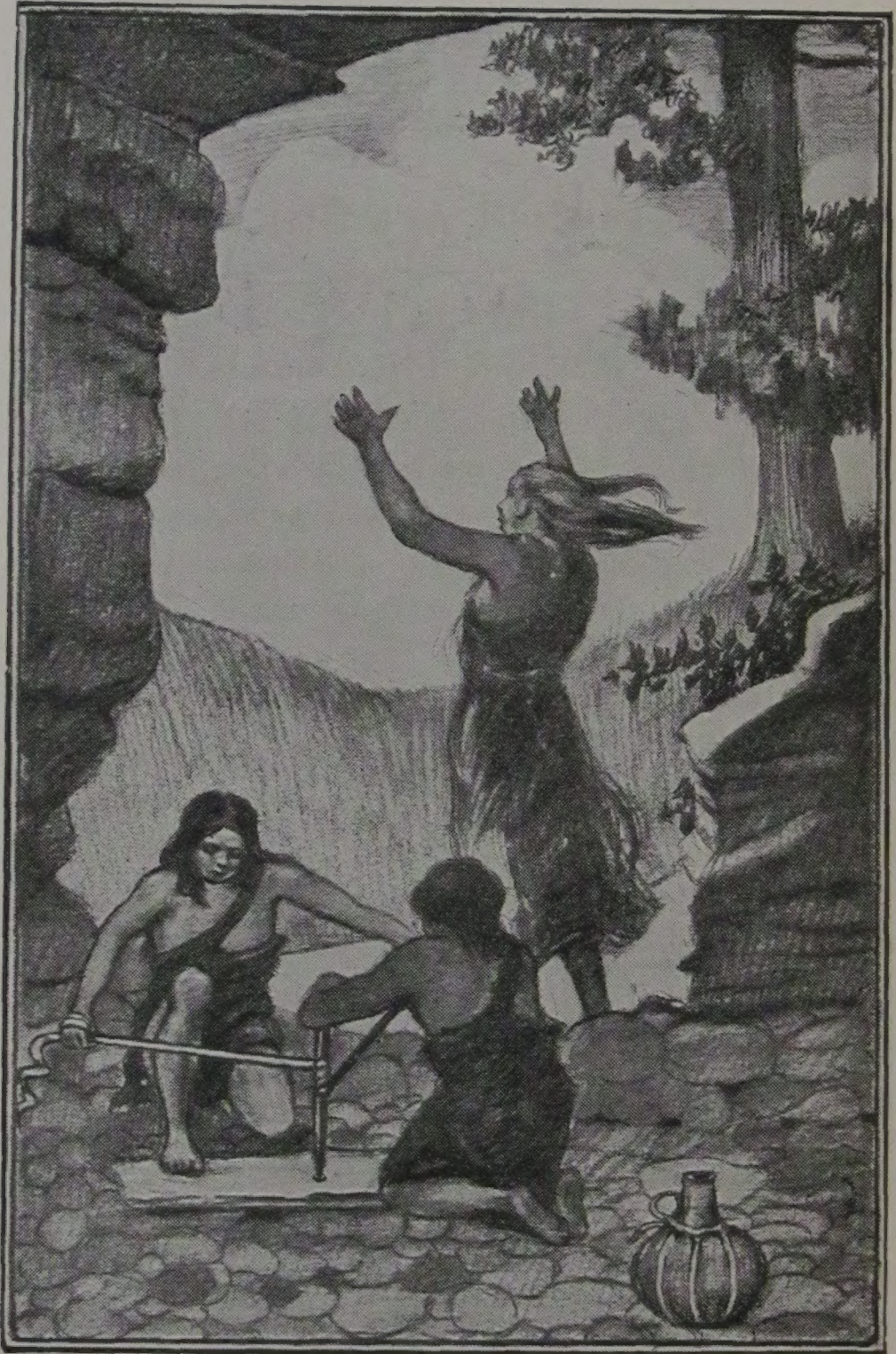
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DANSVILLE, N. Y.

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"For a long time nothing happened"

Bolo the Cave Boy

CHAPTER I

How Bolo Got His Dinner

Bolo crept carefully through the tall grass. With one brown hand he parted the stalks before him, and in the other he carried a noose made from a slender willow withe. His bright, black eyes peered cautiously about at every step.

Some distance ahead of him a small gray rabbit was hopping slowly along, stopping here and there to take a nibble of tender, young grass, or to stand up on his hind legs and look about him. Bolo was hungry and he thought a little rabbit would make him a good dinner.

Closer and closer he crept. He raised the noose for a throw. Then all at once the little animal pricked up his long ears, gave one startled look ahead and plunged off into the thick grass.

At the same moment a boy about as large as Bolo broke through the grass just beyond where the rabbit had stood. He did not see the rabbit. All he saw was Bolo standing with arm upraised and an angry frown on his dark face.

Bolo struck at the boy with his willow wand. He was very angry at him for scaring away the rabbit.

"Why do you strike at me?" said the boy, whose name was Fisher.

"You drove away my dinner," said Bolo fiercely.

"I did not see any dinner," replied Fisher.

"It was a fine rabbit," said Bolo sulkily, "and I am very hungry."

"So am I," said the boy. "Let us go and catch a fish." Bolo's face grew less angry.

"I cannot catch fish," he said. "I can only catch rabbits."

"I will show you how," said Fisher.

Bolo saw that Fisher had something in his hand. It was a long, stout cord of reindeer sinew, and on one end of it was tied a splinter of bone. The splinter was sharp at both ends and the cord was fastened to the middle of it.

The boys left the thick grass and ran down the slope to the river.

There were many trees growing near it, and some of them had long branches which hung out over the water. Fisher caught hold of a branch and swung himself nimbly into a tree. Then he crawled out on a limb that reached out over the river. Bolo followed him.

"We must be very still now," said Fisher.

He unwound the roll of sinew and dropped the bone splinter into the water. It was only two or three minutes before Bolo saw a shining fish leap up and catch it.

Fisher laughed and pulled the fish out of the water. But before he could get hold of it, it had struggled loose and fallen into the river again.

"I think I can catch a fish," said Bolo.

He slid down the tree and crept close to the edge of the water. He kept very still. In a few minutes he saw a big fish come very close to the shore. He made a quick spring and caught it in his hands.

Fisher came down the tree quickly.

"I could not catch a fish like that," he said.

"I catch rabbits that way sometimes," said Bolo.

The boys were so hungry that they did not wait to catch any more fish. They climbed back into the tree and sat down on a limb. They rubbed the fish against the rough bark to loosen the scales, then they tore pieces of flesh out with their fingers and ate them raw.

After they had eaten all they wanted they threw the rest on the ground.

"Now I will catch you," said Bolo.

"Come on then," cried Fisher.

What a queer race it was! They did not run on the ground as boys do now, but swung from limb to limb through the trees. Fisher was very strong and quick, and he dodged and climbed so nimbly that Bolo was soon left some distance behind.

At last they came to the edge of the woods. There were no more trees very close, and Bolo thought Fisher would have to turn back.

"I will get you now," shouted Bolo.

But Fisher slipped down to the end of a long, slender limb and hung with his hands. He swung back and forth, farther and farther at each swing. Before Bolo could reach him he had flung himself far out toward a

tree that stood by itself several yards from the edge of the woods, and with a daring leap, had landed among its branches.

Bolo laughed and started to slide down the limb too. He thought he could leap as far as Fisher could. Then he glanced down to the ground and began to climb back up the tree as fast as he could go.

"The cave bear! the cave bear!" he shouted.

Fisher glanced down, too, and his face had a look of great fear on it as he realized the danger he had been in.

There on the ground below them was an immense black bear, growling and reaching up the trunk of the tree as far as she could.

Bolo was badly frightened. He did not think any more about the race. He clambered back among the trees as fast as he could.

But Fisher did not dare to leap back the way he had come. He thought he would stay where he was. He knew if he should fall the bear would very quickly tear him to pieces.

When Bolo had got quite a distance from the bear he stopped. He could still hear her growling and tearing at the bark. He was glad he was safe, but he was sorry Fisher could not get away, too. He thought that if Fisher did not get away he would no longer have a playmate.

Then he thought of something else and ran on through the branches as fast as he could go.



"There was only one arrow left"

CHAPTER II

How Bolo Learned a Lesson

It did not take Bolo long to get back to the Valley of Caves. The cave where he lived was near the river, not far from the place where he and Fisher had caught their dinner. When he came in sight of it he slid down out of the trees and ran quickly across the open space.

"The bear! the bear!" he cried.

His mother, whose name was Stitcher, was making a wolf-skin coat for One Eye, his father. She was sitting on the ground in front of the cave. She was sewing with a long, slender bone needle, and the thread she used was made of reindeer sinew.

When she heard Bolo shouting she jumped up quickly and ran to catch up little Antelope, her baby, who was playing near by. Then she ran for the cave.

"The bear! the bear!" screamed Bolo over and over. He was out of breath from running, and that was all he could say.

Stitcher at once began to throw dry wood on the fire just inside the cave. She knew that no bear would dare to enter as long as she kept the fire blazing.

It was some time before the excited boy could make her understand where the bear was. She thought it was coming to the cave. But when she found out the danger Fisher was in she stood for a minute thinking.

"The men are all gone," she said. "They have all the spears and harpoons. Here is a strong bow, but there are only three arrows. You can not kill a bear with arrows."

"I will try," said Bolo eagerly.

Not many men in the Clan could shoot with a bow. They had always used spears and harpoons. They made the heads of them out of flintstones. One Eye had been the first man in the Clan to make arrows. He had learned how from a stranger who had once visited the Clan. One Eye thought the arrows much better than the spears, but most of the men liked their old weapons best.

Bolo had never shot an arrow himself, but he had seen his father do so many times. When he thought of the savage bear growling at the foot of the tree he was afraid. Then he thought how brave One Eye was, and of the terrible battle with the auroch which had cost him one of his eyes and had earned for him the name of being the boldest man in the Clan. That had happened many years ago when One Eye was a boy like Bolo.

"I will shoot the bear," he said again, and his voice was more eager than before.

His mother gave him the stout bow and the three arrows. He ran back to the trees as fast as he could go. When he got to the nearest one he took the bow and arrows firmly between his knees and grasped the lowest limb with both hands. In a minute he had drawn himself up and was scurrying back through the branches to the place where poor Fisher was waiting.

He found the boy just where he had left him. The big bear was growling fiercely and walking around the tree. Often she would stop and reach up as far as she could with her forepaws, tearing viciously at the bark and snarling with rage.

When Fisher saw Bolo coming he shouted for joy. He did not think Bolo would come back. Cave people did not often think of helping each other. Each had to take care of himself.

"Now see me shoot the bear," called Bolo proudly, fitting one of the precious arrows to the bow.

"Twang!" went the bowstring.

But Bolo was so excited that the arrow flew wide of

its mark. The bear roared more angrily than ever.

Bolo sat down on a thick limb. He was not so sure of killing the bear now. He fitted the next arrow very carefully and waited till the bear had turned so as to face him. Then he drew the shaft back against the taut string and took steady aim.

"Twang!" went the second arrow.

What a roar there was then! The arrow pierced the bear's shaggy hide just above her shoulder and she rolled over and over on the ground, clawing at it and howling with pain and anger. But presently she was up again, tearing madly at the tree where Bolo was sitting.

There was only one arrow left. Bolo's face grew very sober as he fitted it to the string. If he should not kill the bear this time poor Fisher would have to stay where he was until some of the men came home. He might grow so weary that he could not hold on any longer, and then the bear would eat him.

But if he could kill the bear! Ah, then he would be a hero indeed—a great hero like One Eye. And then, too, the cave men would all see what a fine weapon the arrow was, and they would know that One Eye was wiser than they were. But even One Eye had not thought a bear could be killed with arrows.

Bolo waited until the bear was over her first rage and had grown quiet again. By and by she paused a moment with her forepaws against the tree, looking up into the branches. Bolo took careful aim right at her small, wicked-looking eye.

The third time the arrow flew from the string. And

this time it went straight to its mark! The bear shrieked with agony and reared up on her hind legs. Then she rolled over on her side in the grass. Bolo waited to see if she would get up. Then he called to Fisher.

With a wild whoop, both boys slid down to the ground. At first they did not dare to go very near the bear. Fisher picked up a stone and threw it at her, but she did not move. Then how the boys danced and shouted!

But Bolo soon thought of something else.

"The wolves will come," he said.

"We must hurry back to the caves," said Fisher.

"Then we will not have any bear meat," returned Bolo.

"We must save the meat if we can," said Fisher.

"But we are only two boys, and the wolves are many and fierce."

"Gather some dry wood quickly," said Bolo. "I will run back and bring a torch."

It did not take long for the boys to make a circle of blazing sticks around the carcass of the bear. But almost before it was done they could hear the terrible howl of the hungry wolves, and they knew the pack was closing in about them. Fisher was frightened and wished they had left the meat for the wolves. But Bolo only laughed loudly, and threw stones through the wall of fire at the wolves, and called tauntingly to them. He knew they were safe so long as the fire burned.

Pretty soon it grew dark, and still the hungry wolves howled around the wall of fire, pacing restlessly up and down and watching for a place to break through it. The boys were getting tired. Besides, all the dry wood they

had been able to gather would soon be gone, and then what would they do? They could save themselves by climbing into the trees. but then they would have to give up their bear, and such a supply of meat was a prize. It meant a feast of many days for the whole Clan.

"If I had more arrows I would shoot the wolves, too," said Bolo; "then we could go wherever we liked. When we get back to the cave I will ask my father to teach me how to make them for myself."

"I hear someone shouting," said Fisher. just as the dawn was beginning to show above the treetops.

Both boys called out as loudly as they could. In another minute they were answered.

"We are coming," shouted the men.

The men carried blazing branches in their hands. They came running toward the snarling wolf pack, screaming and waving the firebrands about their heads. The wolves quickly slunk away among the trees and did not dare to come near again.

What a time there was when the men came back to the Valley of Caves bringing the bear. Bolo and Fisher had to tell over and over how it had all happened, and just how the arrow had killed the great beast. One Eye was very proud, partly because the people knew now what good things arrows were, and partly because Bolo had shown himself to be such a hero.

"He has learned a great lesson," said One Eye. "He has learned how to take care of himself like a man."

"You must teach me to make arrows," said Bolo.

"Yes," said One Eye, "that shall be your next lesson."

CHAPTER III

The Flood and the Fire

In a cave close to the river a very old woman lived by herself. She did not do any work. The cave people brought her everything she needed to eat, and when she wanted a new garment Stitcher made it for her. She had something more important to do than to gather food or sew skins. She had to take care of the Great Fire.

Sometimes the fire in the other caves went out. Then Flame, for that was the old woman's name, had to light a torch at the fire in her cave and give it to the person who needed it. So of course the Great Fire must never go out for if it did no one knew how to get any more.

No one knew where Flame got the fire in her cave. Her mother was Keeper of the Great Fire for the Clan as far back as the oldest men could remember. She taught Flame how to talk to the Fire-god and persuade him to give her the fire, but Flame had never told anyone else. She liked to be the fire-keeper herself.

Bolo and Fisher often went to Flame's cave. They liked to watch the great blaze always burning on the big flat rock just inside the entrance to her cave. They brought her dry wood for it, and sometimes she would let them roast nuts or broil slices of meat or fish over the smaller fire where she cooked her own food. She would never allow them to go very near the Great Fire on the big hearth, and she never used that one to cook her food.

Bolo and Fisher often played in Flame's cave. There was a small hole away at the back of it where they could crawl out into the sunlight. Flame did not like this hole. She was afraid some wild animal might come through it. So she told the boys always to roll a great rock against it when they were through playing. This was the first door any of the Clan had ever had.

When it rained the cave people stayed at home. They were warm and dry in the big caves. They always kept great piles of dry wood stored away so that the fires rarely went out. The little children played about in the firelight. The women, with Stitcher to teach them, pounded the skins soft or sewed them into garments. The men busied themselves making new points for their spears and harpoons. But One Eye always made arrow heads instead, and since Bolo killed the cave bear many of the men came to his cave to be taught how to make them, too. Many were beginning to think arrows much better than their old weapons, but some of the old men still declared they were of no use.

Once it began to rain, and for many days the clouds never broke and rain fell constantly. The season was warm and the boys had a great deal of fun running about in the wet. They always left their skin coats in the caves when they did that, for if the skins got very wet it made them stiff and hard.

At first this was sport, but as the days went on and the torrents still poured down the cave people began to get uneasy. Their stock of wood was running low, too, and the weather was turning colder.

"How high the river is running," said Fisher one day. "And see how many branches, and even great trees, are floating down on it."

"It is almost up to the hole in the back of Flame's cave," said Bolo.

"We had better go and tell her," said Fisher. So away they went to Flame's cave.

"The water never comes into my cave," said Flame.

"But it is coming now," cried Bolo in alarm. And sure enough, a little trickle of muddy water was running across the floor.

Flame looked at the tiny stream anxiously.

"We must roll the great rock closer," she said.

Bolo and Fisher ran to put the big rock in place. Then they tried to daub mud about the edges to keep the water out. But it did no good. The stream was constantly growing larger, and Flame grew frightened.

"The water will put out the Great Fire," she said. "Ah, see! It is coming in at the front of the cave, too."

"It will drown us," cried Fisher and Bolo in great fear. "Let us run away from it."

As they hastened out of the cave they saw people hurrying here and there in great confusion. Bolo saw his mother with little Antelope on her arm. She was running toward the trees. He saw One Eye, too, and wondered what he had in the great skin bag he was carrying.

Everyone was screaming and calling, and everywhere he looked he saw the muddy river. It had broken over its banks and was flooding all the land. How fast it came!

Higher and higher it grew, with a great rush like the

breaking of a big wave on the ocean ; and before Bolo and Fisher could get to the trees it was nearly to their knees.

The boys never forgot that terrible time. For many long hours the rain fell in gusty sheets, and below them, as they sat huddled close together on a big limb, they could see nothing but brown, rushing water. They called sometimes, and at first one or another of the cave people would answer. Once Bolo heard his mother's voice. But after a while there were no more answers.

Then it began to grow very cold. The boys could not keep warm even by sitting very close together. In the clouded light they could see groups of cave people on the hills about the Valley. As they looked at one group, to their horror, they saw a great pack of wolves fighting through the water to reach the same high place. From another hilltop they could hear the snarling of frightened and savage hyenas.

"It is better in the trees," said Bolo.

"I wonder where Flame has gone," said Fisher.

It seemed to Bolo as if they must die before the rain ceased and the flood went down. Their hands grew so stiff that they could hardly hold to the limbs. Dark came, and daylight, and dark again, they could not tell how many times, and still the water raged below them. Once in the night they felt something strike the tree, and in the morning the body of a great wildcat hung limply across the end of the limb.

"I am glad he was dead before he found our tree," said Bolo with a shudder.

When the rain stopped at last and the water began to

go down the boys could hardly move. They tried to call, but their lips were stiff and would not make much sound. Now and then, as the water whirled past, the ghastly face of a drowned cave man would glimmer for a moment below them, only to be swallowed up at once by the grim, brown water.

The water went down as fast as it had risen. As soon as it was safe the boys slid stiffly to the ground and limped back to the caves. They were hungry and cold and miserable, and they thought how good the fire would feel. But though they searched long and carefully through the sodden ashes they could not find so much as a single spark.

By and by more of the cave people began to come back home, one by one. Frantically they searched through the desolate caves for a glimmer of fire, but none could be found. They were in despair. How could they live without fire? There would be no way to cook their food or to warm themselves when it grew cold. And, worst of all, there would now be no way to keep the wild beasts out of the caves, and all of the people would have to go back to the trees to live, as did their fore-parents so long, long ago. They were very wretched, and could do nothing but huddle together in groups, trying to realize all that the loss of their fires would mean to them.

But where was Flame? Perhaps if they could find her she could help them. They thought she knew where the Fire-god lived and could get him to send them fire.

"Let us see if we can find Flame," said Bolo.

So he and Fisher started out to look for her.

CHAPTER IV

The God Who Lived in the Sun

By this time the sun was shining brightly. The boys held out their stiffened hands and thought how good and warm the sunshine felt.

"It is like the Great Fire," said Fisher.

"Perhaps the Fire-god lives in the sun," whispered Bolo, looking toward it with an awed expression on his dark face.

As they came near Flame's cave they saw that she was there, sure enough. She was down on her knees in front of the entrance, making strange motions with her hands. They thought she was looking for something.

"Wait a minute." Bolo caught Fisher by the arm and drew him back. "Let us see what she is doing."

Just then she slowly rose to her feet. She turned her face toward the sun and stretched her lean arms up as far as she could. Her long gray hair streamed out behind her and her eyes were very bright. She looked as if she was seeing something a long way off. Her lips moved.

"She is talking to the sun," said Fisher in a frightened whisper. "Perhaps she is calling the Fire-god."

The boys came cautiously nearer. They were not afraid of Flame, but they were not sure what might happen next. And they were very curious to hear what she

was saying. By and by Flame turned and saw the boys. She beckoned them to come nearer.

"The Water-god is great," she said in a solemn voice, "but greater is the Fire-god. He has spoken to me from his dwelling place, the sun. He has promised that we shall have the Great Fire again. But," she added slowly, "I am old and my strength has grown small. I must have help. You must help me."

How proud the boys were! Gladly they ran at her bidding to bring the driest sticks they could find. It was hard to discover many, for the long rain had soaked everything through and through. But they climbed into the trees and broke off dead limbs that had become partially dried out again, and they broke open rotten logs to get the dry, crumbly wood that lay at their hearts. It was not very long until they had brought together a nice supply of dry sticks and light, tindery wood.

Flame was on her knees again when they came back, and now they could see what she was doing. She had a long, pointed, hardwood stick in her hands and was twirling it very fast in a little hollow in a flat block of soft, dry wood. While she worked she mumbled to herself, now and then looking up at the sun and speaking as if to the god that she said lived in it. The boys stood very still and watched her.

Flame worked a long time. Then she threw down the pointed stick and wrung her hands.

"I am too old," she wailed. "No more are my hands strong to bring the Fire-god to help my people. Oh, woe is me! woe is me!"

Bolo came up timidly and touched her shoulder. He held out both hands, opening and shutting his wiry brown fingers.

"My hands are very strong," he said. Let them be as your hands and twirl the stick while you speak to the Fire-god."

Then Fisher spoke up eagerly. "Do you not remember the game we play with the stick and the strap? Do you remember how very fast we can make it go? Let us both twirl the stick with the strap while Flame speaks to the Fire-god."

So Fisher brought a flat, strong strap made of reindeer hide and wrapped it around the stick. Then he and Bolo took hold of the ends and drew them back and forth.

How fast the pointed stick did go! Flame showed them how to hold it in the hollowed block, then she rose and once more faced the sun, her arms held toward it and her lips mumbling a prayer to the Fire-god.

Faster and faster whirled the stick, and louder and louder prayed Flame. Pretty soon she began stamping her feet and waving her hands. She moved around the boys in a circle, her face always toward the sun.

For a long time nothing happened. Then at last Bolo saw a tiny thread of smoke rising from the hollow.

"The fire is coming," he shouted. "Pray! pray!"

In another moment a very, very small spark glowed through the smoke. The eager boys sprinkled crumbs of dry tinder upon it and soon they had a small blaze. A few dry sticks made it leap up brightly, and then how Flame shouted and sang and flung her arms up toward the sun.

"I have heard the will of the Fire-god," she said after a time. "I am old, and he has taken this way to show me that I must teach someone else to call him. I might have died in the water, and then who could have helped the cave people? They must all have died, too. And it is better that two should know than one, for then the secret of the Great Fire will not be so easily lost. You are faithful; you will be faithful. I will teach you. But first you must carry fire to the people."

Bolo and Fisher each took a lighted torch and started back to where the discouraged cave people were huddled together. How everyone shouted for joy when they saw the fire coming. They knew that again they were safe in their homes in the Valley of Caves.

It was not many days until most of the people who were left were back at home again. Some had been swept away by the water, some had wandered away when they found there was no fire, and some had died from cold and hunger. All felt very sad when they saw how the water had laid waste their pretty valley.

They had lost all their weapons, too, and old Quickfinger, who had made most of the spears and harpoons for the Clan, was nowhere to be found. They thought he must have died, for they knew he would never have left them.

Then One Eye showed them what he had carried away in the great skin bag. He had gathered up all the arrows he could find, many spear and harpoon heads, and the flint flakers that Quickfinger and himself had used in making them.

"I can make better arrows than Quickfinger," he said. "Arrows are better than spears or harpoons. I have taught Bolo, and he will help me make them. I will teach you, too. The women must make the bowstrings. Soon we will have plenty of weapons."

"One Eye is wise and prudent," cried the cave men joyfully. "We will do whatever he says. He will take care of us."

But they did not know that Flame had taught Bolo and Fisher a greater lesson than how to make arrows. She made the boys promise to keep secret what she taught them. She did not believe it was right for all the Clan to know how to make fire. She thought the Fire-god would be angry if she told them.

Years after, when Flame was dead, Bolo and Fisher thought the rest of the people ought to know, too. They did not believe the Fire-god would be angry if they taught them all. So one day, when they were both old men, they gathered the Clan together—but that is another story.

CHAPTER V

A Long Search and What Came of It

Many days went by and still Stitcher did not come back to the Valley of Caves. One Eye took his bow and arrows and went here and there among the hills, but nothing could he find of either Stitcher or little Antelope. He was very sad, for he remembered how pretty little Antelope used to run out to meet him when he came home after a hunt, and what fine shirts of reindeer and wolf-skins Stitcher made for him. One day he came back to the caves after being gone a long time. He threw himself wearily down and said very sadly:

"They are dead. I will search no more."

But Bolo did not believe his mother was dead.

"I am going to try to find them," he said. "Make me a strong bow and a quiver full of fine arrows, for I may be gone a long time."

One Eye shook his head mournfully.

"You will only die, too," he said.

But Bolo brought some flint stones and set to making his arrows. Then One Eye sat down to show him how to make them more keen and beautiful than any he had ever made. He took a curved piece of bone and chipped off the large flakes. Then he pressed off smaller flakes one by one, working very carefully, until he had made a fine, keen point. Bolo watched his father and worked

in the same way, and soon they had a nice lot of arrows. Bolo made a new head for his spear, too, and bound it on with a fresh cord of reindeer sinew.

At last all was ready. One Eye brought a great, hollow bone that he had taken from the leg of a mammoth years before and fastened a wooden base to it. He drilled holes in the upper edge and strung thongs through them so that Bolo could carry it over his shoulder. Then he put the arrows into the hollow of the bone. It made a good quiver.

Bolo carried his bow over one shoulder and his quiver full of arrows over the other. He carried his spear in his hand, and at his side he hung a heavy hammer made of stone. One Eye wanted him to leave the hammer and take a great club that he had made from the jawbone of a cave bear, to which one long, sharp tooth was still attached. But Bolo was afraid of this club. He was afraid it would make the cave bears angry with him. So he did not take it. Fisher wanted to go with Bolo, but Flame said "No." She had grown very feeble and she was afraid she might die. If both boys went away and never came back there would be no one to talk to the Fire-god. So Fisher stayed to help Flame tend the Great Fire.

For three days Bolo wandered about over the hills. At night he tied himself to the branch of a tree, safely out of the reach of harm, and slept soundly. He shot a rabbit now and then for food, and sometimes caught a fish. One day he found himself suddenly surrounded by a pack of snarling, hungry hyenas, but a few well-aimed arrows

sent them scurrying off into the hills. How glad Bolo was that they were not wolves!

One day Bolo climbed a tall tree that stood alone on a hill. He hoped he might be able to find some trace of those he sought. He looked slowly about in every direction. On one side the hills lay like great, rounded billows, many of them covered with trees. On the other side wound the river, in some places between sloping shores, in others between steep banks. Off toward the north it disappeared behind a jutting cliff. It was a long way from Bolo's tree, but he thought he could see something moving along the river bank. He looked again eagerly. Perhaps that might be his mother and little Antelope.

He climbed down the tree and ran across to another hilltop closer to the river. Here he climbed another tree, and from that he saw something so strange that he held his breath in terrified surprise.

Great, lumbering creatures were moving about along the edge of the river. They had heavy, swinging snouts, and from their enormous heads rose in great curves immense, yellowish things that looked like queer horns. Bolo had never seen any animals like these before. He watched them with fascinated eyes, wondering what they could be. Sometimes one of them would reach up into a tree with its great snout and pull a branch down. Two of them appeared to be quarreling, and one thrust its shaggy head and wicked looking tusks against the side of the other and made him stagger. Another waded out into the river and appeared to be drinking. In a minute

he threw his trunk over his back and out spouted a stream of muddy water. There were fully twice as many of these animals as there were fingers on both of his hands.

At last Bolo thought again of his mother and little Antelope. How he hoped they had not been trampled to death by these dreadful beasts. He had almost given up finding them now, for he was sure that even if they had not been drowned or killed by wild beasts they must have starved. So, sad at heart, he started on the long journey back to the Valley of Caves.

Weary and heartsick, he came in sight of the caves. But who was that running up the slope to meet him? Surely it could not be—yes, it was! It was dear little Antelope, holding up her baby hands and shouting his name. Down the hill he ran, forgetting his aching limbs and heavy heart, and how both laughed and shouted for joy as he caught his lost sister up and put her on his shoulder. Together thus, they came to the cave where Stitcher sat, her brown hands for once idle as she leaned wearily against the side of a great rock. She looked very worn and thin, but smiled gladly when Bolo came up and put his arm about her shoulders.

"We looked everywhere," he said. "Where have you been all this time? And how did you live?"

"I will tell you another time," said Stitcher. "I do not like to talk about it now."

How excited Bolo was as he told One Eye and the other cave men about the strange herd he had seen in the distant valley. The whole Clan was at once in a turmoil. One Eye gave it as his opinion that the great animals

were mammoths, which rarely came into that region, and were very valuable for their meat, their skins, and the ivory in the long tusks. One mammoth would make meat for all the Clan for many days, and they were all eager to start at once on a great hunt for them.

"We must take spears and harpoons," said one.

"No, we must take bows and arrows," said another.

"We will go up the river and attack them from the water," said a third.

"No," objected a fourth, "that would frighten them back into the hills and we could not get them."

In short, each man in the Clan seemed to think he knew just what to do, and would not listen to anyone else. For a while it looked as if the great hunt would have to be given up.

"Why not choose someone who is brave and wise to lead you, and then all do as he tells you to?" suggested Bek, the oldest man in the Clan.

No one had thought of that.

"That is right," said Flame, who had come up to listen.

"But how shall we know who is the wisest?" called several voices at once.

"Who has done the most for the Clan?" asked old Bek.

"One Eye saved our weapons when the flood came."

"He taught us to make arrows."

"He is not afraid."

"Then let One Eye be the leader," cried Flame, and to this they all agreed.

Such a time as there was then! The cave men ran here and there gathering up spears and arrows and clubs

and making themselves ready. The women bound new points on the spears with heavy sinews, and Bolo helped his father prepare a number of torches from wood soaked in fat. Flame brought some other torches made from knotty pine limbs. They all knew they would need fire with which to fight the mammoths.



"Bolo had never seen any animals like this before"

CHAPTER VI

The Hunt for the Mammoths

It was a long way to where Bolo had seen the herd, and they were all afraid the animals might have wandered away. Bolo and Fisher ran eagerly ahead, and Bolo pointed out to Fisher the things he had noticed while searching for his mother. One Eye said very little, but he sent men up into every tall tree they passed to see if they could discover the herd. They traveled all day, and when night came they built a great circle of fire and lay down to rest. One Eye chose four men to carry torches, and it was their duty to see that the fires did not go out.

When they came to the valley where Bolo had seen the mammoths they found nothing but trampled grass and the broken limbs of trees. They went very slowly and carefully after that. It was not long till a man, who had climbed into a very tall tree on a hilltop, called out excitedly that he could see something moving at the base of a cliff that hung high and steep above the river. One Eye climbed the tree himself, and looked long and closely where the man pointed.

"It is the herd," he said. "Now let every man do just as I say."

He divided the cave men into two parties. One was to move up very slowly from the side where they were, the other was to travel rapidly around through a valley

behind some hills and come upon the herd from the other side. Bolo, young as he was, was appointed to lead the first party, while One Eye himself led the second division through the valley. The men seemed pleased at this for they thought Bolo deserved some honor.

When the cave men had surrounded the herd in this fashion they were to close in upon them, each man carrying a blazing torch, and try to drive the animals up the landward slope of the cliff, and over it into the river. They knew they could never kill one of these huge beasts with any weapons they had. So they thought to kill them by driving them over the cliff and making them fall upon the rocks below. Some of the cave men who had never seen a mammoth were very much frightened at the terrible beasts. They said they were going back to the caves. But the others taunted them and called them women, until they grew ashamed and went on with the rest.

Very stealthily and carefully the two bodies of cave men drew toward the great herd of grazing animals. One of the older men told in whispers of another such hunt he had taken part in when a young man. He said he had never tasted any meat so good as that of the mammoth.

Bolo watched carefully for his father's signal. At last it came, and when he saw the tossing torch he motioned his men to light their torches and go on quickly.

In a very few minutes the surprised mammoths found themselves attacked from three sides by a screaming, leaping line of cave men, each swinging a fiery torch

above his head. At first the huge beasts stood still. Then they turned and went awkwardly up the long slope on the landward side of the bluff. The men followed as closely as they dared, for they feared that when the animals came to the edge of the bluff they would swing around and rush through the line of their attackers, trampling them under their great feet.

One Eye was again leading the entire band. Always he was at the very front, shouting and waving his torch. One man, more daring than the rest, ran up and thrust his burning firebrand right against the shaggy side of the nearest mammoth. The frenzied beast, with a bellow of rage, turned and tore back through the yelling mass of hunters. In spite of all their efforts to escape, two men were killed and three more badly hurt. The rest of the herd, terrified by the confusion, huddled together on the edge of the bluff.

"Close in! close in!" shouted One Eye, brandishing his torch in a fury of excitement. But the cave men were too much frightened to obey. They were scattered by the stampeding mammoth, and were too scared and confused to obey their leader. What made things worse was that they had never been used to obeying the orders of anyone.

But Bolo and Fisher obeyed. Bolo had drawn a little away from the rest of the hunters. He had swung his stout bow down from his shoulder and carefully fitted an arrow to the taut string. No one noticed the sharp twang as the arrow left the bowstring, but all saw one of the mammoths rear suddenly with pain and plunge into the

midst of the herd. Startled at this sudden onslaught, the herd pressed a little closer to the edge of the cliff, and then—

Never in all his life did Bolo hear again such a terrific shriek as the falling mammoth gave. For many nights after that he covered his ears as he lay down to sleep so that he might not hear it again in his dreams. Then came the sickening crash as the gigantic body struck the rocks below. The men turned and fled, and the remaining mammoths, in a frenzy of fear, tore back down the landward side of the cliffs into the valley. For some moments the hunters, wide-eyed and breathless, watched the herd as it lumbered down the valley, until at last it passed behind the hills and was gone.

When the cave men hurried down to the river's edge they found the immense, shaggy carcass of the dead mammoth lying in the shallow water at the base of the cliff. They could not move it to dry land, so they waded out to it and went to work to cut it up with their long flint knives right where it was.

But first they sent four of the swiftest runners back to the Valley of Caves, and to another Clan who lived far up the river, to tell them all to come and partake of the feast. From every direction they came, men, women and children, and by the time the hunters had the great carcass cut up and carried to the shore there was a great gathering of hungry cave people who all rejoiced at the prospect of so delicious a feast.

They stayed here several days, feasting and resting. Then, every woman, loaded with meat, and every man,

carrying a heavy club to protect the party from attacks of wild beasts, they took their way back to the Valley of Caves. They all knew that if the men should carry the meat themselves they might all be killed by wolves or other savage beasts. So the men kept themselves ready to fight while the women bore the burdens.

There was great rejoicing when they reached home again. Every one praised One Eye for his wisdom and courage, and they all agreed that he should be their leader as long as he lived.

"Bolo will be as wise as his father," said Flame. "Wiser, too, perhaps," she added, nodding her head sagely, for she thought of the important secret that no one in the Clan knew except herself and the two boys.

"Then Bolo shall be our leader after his father is dead," said old Bek. But he suspected what Flame meant.

CHAPTER VII

How Stitcher Saved the Clan from Hunger

Many months passed by and in the Valley of Caves all was going well again. The flood was almost forgotten. Nuts and berries were plenty in the woods and the hunters always came home laden. No one thought very much about the time when they had been so hungry and cold and wretched. That is, not many people did. But Stitcher could never forget the days after the great flood when she had wandered about in the hills with little Antelope in her arms, not knowing which way to go, hungry and weary and in danger. She always shuddered when she thought of it, and called her little girl up close to her.

She remembered other times, too, when nuts and berries were few and game was scarce. She thought there ought to be some way to get ready for such times so the cave people would not need to suffer so much. So one day when the men brought in great quantities of meat she cut some in strips and hid it in the top of the cave.

"I will keep this till the rest of the meat is gone," said Stitcher. But she told no one what she had done.

It was a long time before Stitcher thought of the meat again. Then she only remembered it because she happened to think of that terrible time when she had been so hungry. She reached up in the top of the cave and

brought down the strips, and behold! the meat was deliciously smoked and dried by the heat of the fire.

"It is good," she said, and gave some to One Eye to taste.

"Yes, it is good," he said, reaching for more.

"After this we will not need to go hungry any more," said Stitcher, "for when the hunting is good we will save meat."

"How wise and thoughtful you are," said One Eye.

There was something else that Stitcher did not think of for a long time. When she was so far from home, and little Antelope was crying for food, she had found some strange stalks that had grains like tiny brown berries in a sort of husk at their tip. She shook some of these berries out and gave them to Antelope, and ate some herself. They tasted a little like nut meats but were even better.

Stitcher had brought some of these grains home in her doe-skin pouch. She carried them to eat on the way, but she did not eat them all up. When she got back to the caves she threw the rest of the berries out on the ground. A few days after that she noticed some particularly bright grass growing where she had thrown the grains. But she did not think that it might have grown from them.

The grains had fallen in a sheltered place where the new green blades were not trampled down. In time the stalks became yellow and dry, and at their tips were more husks filled with smooth brown grains. When Stitcher saw them she cried out in delight.

"They are like the berries I scattered on the ground," she exclaimed. "I will scatter these again. I like to see them grow."

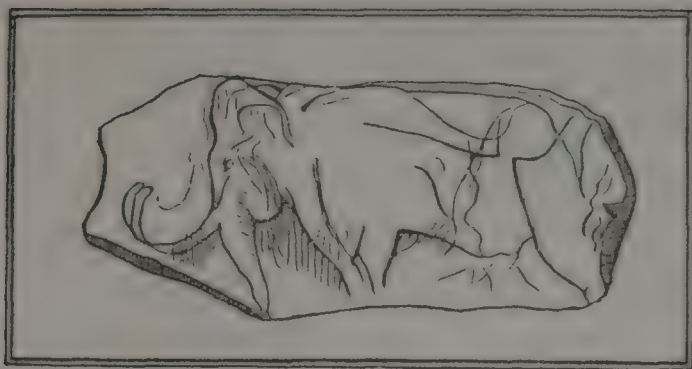
So, instead of eating the brown kernels, Stitcher shook them all out of the husks on the ground. This time she watched them, and was careful to see that no one walked upon them. After a long time there were more yellow stalks and more sweet, nutty grains.

"Here are a great many berries," said Stitcher, as she shook them out into a big wooden bowl. "We will eat some of them. But most of them I will scatter again. By and by there will be enough so we can all have some of them to eat."

After that Stitcher had some grain growing near her cave all the time. Many heard of this wonderful new food and came long distances to get some of the kernels. And soon most of the cave people were raising little patches of wheat in the open spaces about their caves.

"We will never be hungry again," said Stitcher.

Years after that Stitcher lost all her teeth and could not eat the hard grains. So she put some of them into a hollowed stone and pounded them with another stone till they were soft. In this way the cave people came at last to grind grain for bread. But it was many, many years before they learned how to do that. For a long time they ate it just as it came from the husk.



Picture of a Mammoth Cut in Ivory by a Cave Man and Found in one of the Caves of France.

CHAPTER VIII

The Pictures on the Wall

Bek, the oldest man in the Clan, lived in a cave not very far from the one where Flame kept the Great Fire.

It was a wonderful cave, more wonderful, even the boys thought, than Flame's. They were almost afraid to go into it, however, for the cave people thought old Bek had the power of making charms.

One day as Bolo peeped into Bek's cave the old man was drawing a picture on a smooth place on the rock wall. He had a queer little lamp made of hollowed chalk-stone. This was filled with fat. Into the fat Bek had stuck a bit of the pith of a water-rush. He could light this little chalk-cup lamp and go on with his pictures when he had no need for fire.

"What are you doing?" asked Bolo.

"Come and see," said Bek.

When Bolo went closer he saw that it was a drawing of a reindeer. He watched as Bek added line after line, bringing out the graceful curve of the neck, the turn of the long, branching horns, and the dainty, slender legs.

"I should like to make a picture, too," said Bolo eagerly.

"You may try," said Bek, handing him the bit of brown soft stone he had been using.

So Bolo tried and tried, but when he was done no one could have told what it was he had been trying to draw.

"I will make pictures yet some day," cried Bolo, throwing down the stone. "I will make the cave bear I killed, and the mammoths."

"See here, now," said Bek.

He took a large, smooth piece of the tusk of the mammoth the cave men had killed. One Eye had given him one of the ivory tusks because he knew the old man loved beautiful things, and the ivory was very smooth and beautiful. Then he took a sharp flint awl and began to make deep, careful marks in the ivory. Bolo watched him with great interest.

"Why, it is the mammoth itself," he cried at last. "Only wait, Bek; the great tusk did not curve up quite like that. It was more like this."

Bolo took the awl and made a mark that he thought showed more nearly how the tusk looked. Yet he was not quite satisfied and tried again, and the next time both he and Bek declared that the curve was right.

"Now we must put in the long hair," said Bek, drawing short, straight lines down over the animal's head and shoulders. "There, now! here is the eye, too, and the big, flapping ears. Ah, ha, my Bolo, we must show this to One Eye and see what he says."

When One Eye saw the drawing he became very grave.

"It is a charm," he said. "Whoever carries that can never be harmed by a mammoth."

So he bored a hole through one end of the ivory and ran a thong through it. Then he hung it about Bolo's neck. The lad was very proud of his new ornament and showed everybody the wonderful picture Bek had made.

Day after day Bolo worked with Bek in his cave. Many were the drawings he made, or tried to make, and at last old Bek began to say he was doing very well.

"The animals like to have us make their pictures," said Bek. "They think we want to be friends with them when we do that."

"I will make them look more like animals," said Bolo. "I will cut them out with my flint knife." So after he had drawn a picture of a reindeer he cut it out very carefully.

Now it was Bek's turn to be surprised.

"I had never thought of doing that," he said. So he, too, tried to carve pictures of animals he had drawn.

By and by other cave men began to be interested in the pictures that Bek and Bolo made, and soon many of the men were trying their skill. The women brought a sort of red and brown clay, and painted the animals after the men had drawn them on the cave walls.

And although all this was thousands and thousands of years ago, the drawings and paintings are still to be seen. They tell us many things more than have been related here about the cave men of Bolo's time. They tell us of another animal, more terrible than the cave bear or the mammoth, the dreaded Sabre-Tooth, striped with rich, velvety brown like a tiger, and strong and blood-

thirsty as a lion. They tell us of the ways in which the cave men fought and lived and learned, and so came to know many things that were never dreamed of in the days of Bolo. But all that is another story.

What is of more interest to us just now is to know that when Flame died, many years after the great hunt, Fisher was made Keeper of the Great Fire in her stead. This was the highest honor the Clan could show, excepting only the honor they had shown to One Eye when they made him their leader.

"Bolo must learn many things," said One Eye. "I am growing old and the Clan must never again be without a lawmaker. And the man who is to make the laws must be fearless and wise and good."

It was long after that, however, before Bolo took his place at the head of the Clan. For One Eye lived to an old age, and became wiser and more just with every year.

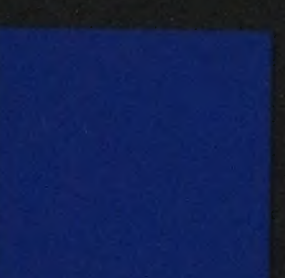
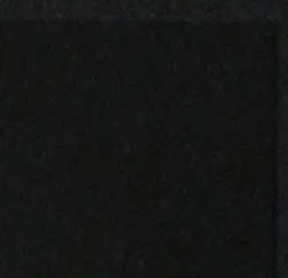
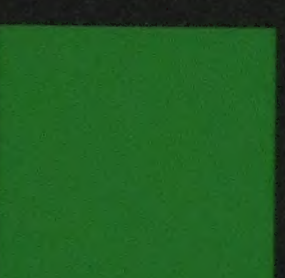
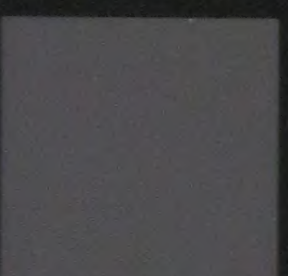
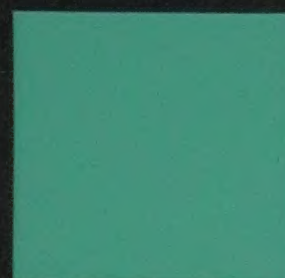
Little Antelope grew up as pretty and graceful as the beautiful animal whose name she bore. When the young Chief of another Clan, living in a valley far across the hills, saw her as she sat sewing skins beside her mother, and called to her to follow him, she did so gladly, for he was tall and brave and handsome.

There was another pretty maiden, too, whom Bolo thought the loveliest he had ever seen. So, one day he found a new cave, where no one had ever lived, and made it ready for his own home.

But how he won the maiden, and what brave deeds he did in his long after years cannot be told here. That, too, is another story.

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